

A new species of *Lepidochrysops* Hedicke (Lepidoptera : Lycaenidae) from the Western Cape Province

By C. G. C. DICKSON

And Relevant Notes by C. W. WYKEHAM

Lepidochrysops braueri spec. nov.

MALE UPPERSIDE

Rather light powdery blue, relatively dull in certain lights but, depending on the angle of the wings, intense and comparatively shiny in other lights. A broad, well-defined marginal blackish-brown border (some 2.5-3 mm. in width) and marking of the same colour at end of cell, in both wings. Cilia chequered blackish-brown and white.

Forewing. Veins blackish-brown. Costa edged with same colour but bordered broadly with it near wing-base and with broad white scaling for a little distance from the base. Lunule at end of cell prominent. A hind-marginal blackish line. A dark line parallel to and more than half way beyond middle of cilia, in white spaces up to and including the one in area 3.

Hindwing. Veins mainly dark as in forewing. Costa to a large extent broadly dark. Discocellular lunule narrower than in forewing. Dark marginal border continuing into innermarginal zone but, more basally, replaced by white scaling. A relatively large black spot, dusted with vivid blue scales and bordered with lighter blue, in area 2 near wing-margin; an indication of dark spots in areas 3-6, apparent chiefly through the diffuse light-blue scaling which more or less surrounds them (and which is partially visible in area 1c); a more distinct, rather elongate marking in area 7, with some white scaling almost surrounding it and occurring rather prominently at either end of it. A marginal black line. Cilia virtually as in forewing, the dark parallel line not present (or hardly so) beyond area 3 and faint even at this point.

UNDERSIDE

Forewing. Rather light grey-brown. Some of the veins partly white-scaled. Costa for some distance from base narrowly bordered with white, and innermargin bordered with white. Broad lunulate marking at end of cell and postmedian series of markings very dark brown, edged (mainly inwardly and outwardly in the case of the latter) with white scaling and some of this edging with short projections in places (such projections occurring between and joining the marking at end of cell and two of the postmedian spots). Postmedian spots seven in number, mostly large but diminishing in size towards upper end of series and the 7th one very small (in one wing, doubled); upper part of series inwardly curved. Series of white streaks beyond but very close to spots (and confluent with the outer white edging of the lowest one) prominent and only partially lunulate in form; space beyond this series very dark brown and prominent. Submarginal white rings very prominent and with only small dark centres (that of the uppermost ring hardly present); two lowest rings confluent and angular and forming a large wedge-shaped white marking. A very dark brown or black marginal line. Cilia virtually as on upperside.

Hindwing. Ground colour as in forewing. Costa bordered with some white scaling; white suffusion basally and between part of cell and inner

margin; the dark markings edged with white. An elongated nearly black marking adjoining basal portion of vein 8; a fairly small very dark brown to black, rather oval spot adjoining inner margin, sub-basally; a very small, very dark brown spot in area 1c, sub-basally; an oval very dark brown spot in cell above the foregoing spot and an almost black, round spot near costa, sub-basally. Dark brown lunule at end of cell fused with 5th median marking. Lowest marking of series roundish, very dark brown, well detached from and basad of the 2nd marking; 2nd-7th markings dark brown, all virtually confluent, mostly fairly large, and irregularly disposed and shaped (the 4th small); 7th marking with its white edging prolonged inwardly in the form of a V. The 8th marking represented as a large detached blackish-brown spot, close to costa and more basad than main portion of series. White chevrons beyond discal markings mostly fused so as to form a fairly broad, irregular zig-zag band partly in contact with the white edging of the median markings, but leaving some narrow spaces of dark colouring; the lower portion of band much reduced in width and its constituent parts not chevron-shaped; the upper end also narrowing, and becoming very irregular and broken. The following space dark brown. Submarginal white rings, near and at anal angle, reduced and not very well defined but at its innermost extremity the series represented by a small clear pointed marking; at the upper end of the series the final "ring" narrow and elongated, and with a very dark brown patch basad of it (and this bounded inwardly by the uppermost marking of the white zig-zag band). A black spot in inner half of ring in area 2, the white of the latter replaced by dull-orange basad of this spot, and a lunule of metallic pale green-blue scales bounding the black spot outwardly; in area 1c a trace of another, greatly reduced, black spot with metallic scaling. Marginal line very dark brown. Cilia practically as on upperside.

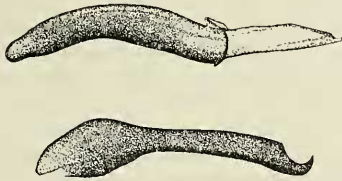
Head with white scales and hairs between antennae, and white scales and black and white hairs frontally. Eyes very dark golden-brown, edged with creamy-white. Palpi virtually black above (the last joint entirely black), greyish-white on sides and beneath, and with blackish and greyish-white hairs beneath. Antennae black with white rings; the lower inner part of club orange-brown and the lower outer portion white, with white scales curving up on the outer side just short of the extremity. Thorax and abdomen black above, the former with light blue-grey hairs; beneath with greyish-white scales and hairs, this also applying largely to the legs themselves.

Length of forewing 17.5 mm. (but in one small example seen, only 14.75 mm.).

♂ Holotype: Lange Berg, above Geelboslaagte, a few miles E. of Montagu, Cape Province, 26.xi.1962 (C. W. Wykeham); two ♂ paratypes with same data apart from date of capture, in one case, of 15.xi.1962; one ♂ paratype: Robinson Pass, Cape Province, 30.xii.1965 (N. A. Brauer). (Two further, poor, examples also examined.) The holotype has been donated to the British Museum (Natural History). (British Museum type number: Rh 18481). The paratypes are in C. W. Wykeham's collection and in the collection of the Transvaal Museum. The description was made from the holotype.

The paratypes are, in essentials, the same as the holotype. On the upperside, however, the dark marginal border of the hindwing embraces

far more prominent, blue submarginal rings. On the underside there is some detail-variation of the type that might be expected, and the more basal dark spots (particularly in one example) are, as a whole, definitely black or blackish.



Lepidochrysops braueri spec. nov.

Aedeagus and valve \times approximately 20.

This butterfly comes close to *L. oreas* Tite and *L. australis* Tite*, but it is readily distinguishable from both of these insects. On the upperside, characteristic features include the lighter tone of the blue colouring, with its variable intensity and the tendency of some of the white markings of the underside to show through to a slight extent, and the comparatively clear definition of the broad, dark marginal borders. Features on the underside are the closeness, in the forewing, of the series of white lunules to the postmedian spots, the formation by these lunules of a relatively even line and the prominence of the dark space beyond this line, also the roundness and conspicuousness of the submarginal white rings; and, in the hindwing (in all but one of the examples seen), the comparatively wide and more contiguous white markings of the zig-zag series and the tendency of the submarginal white rings to be more nearly round than is often the case in the allied species mentioned. The forewings are rather more rounded terminally than is usual in males of the above species. (The Robinson Pass example has a pronounced dark space beyond the discal markings of the forewing underside, and the postmedian white markings of the hindwing are, individually, more clear-cut.)

This butterfly was found at an altitude of at least 3,000 ft. above sea-level. Its occurrence with, or at least close to, *L. oreas* Tite precludes any possibility of its being a subspecies of this insect. Judging by a single example which has been examined, the aedeagus and valves of the genitalia confirm its distinctness.

It must be emphasised that the species itself was discovered by Dr. G. van Son, who took a damaged female specimen at Deepwells, N. of

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Knysna, as far back as 1941. After Mr. N. A. Brauer's capture of the male example from the Robinson Pass (secured on the summit of a high peak above the Pass), Dr. van Son suggested that the species should be named *braueri*, and he also most generously consented to the preparation of this description of the butterfly.

When studying the present species reference has been made to the recent revisions on sections of the genus by Mr. G. E. Tite (*op. cit.*) and Dr. C. B. Cottrell*. Sincere thanks are also due to Mr. Tite for his kindness in reading the manuscript before its publication.

OBSERVATIONS SPECIFICALLY BY C. W. WYKEHAM

In November 1962 I netted the proposed species *Lepidochrysops braueri* on the Langeberg near Montagu. The first occasion was on the 11th when I ascended the mountain with my uncle, Mr. C. G. Dickson, from the van der Spuy's farm Geelboslaagte. My uncle remained on the higher slopes above the farm while I climbed to the ridge of the mountain.

Weather conditions were mediocre with partial cloud cover and constant wind. I found two male specimens near the top, on the lee side of the mountain fluttering about some low shrubs.

I netted further specimens of this striking Blue in the same locality on the 15th and 26th of November, 1962, but never found them in any numbers.

"Blencathra", Cambridge Avenue, St. Michael's Estate, Cape Town.

Easter on the French Riviera, April 1966

By C. G. M. DE WORMS, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.E.S.

Easter is an occasion in the year when spring is virtually at its best in the more southern climes of the northern hemisphere. I was much attracted by the success that Mr. R. F. Bretherton achieved at this period on the south coast of France in April 1962 (*vide Ent. Record*, 74: 144) in spite of fairly unfavourable conditions. Though I very much followed in his footsteps, my experiences were on the whole very different from his both as regards the season and the weather so that I have considered it of interest to give an account of my collecting in that fine part of the Riviera known as Provence.

I duly set out on the afternoon of 6th April, reaching Nice by air in 1½ hours. On landing there I took over by arrangement with B.E.A. a small Renault, apparently brand new, and at once threaded my way through the dense traffic along the Promenade des Anglais to visit that eminent entomologist Monsieur F. Dujardin whom I had not seen since 1962. I found him tending a large family of nearly full-fed larvae of *Charaxes jasius* L. He kindly gave a lot of most helpful information about the region I was about to stay in as regards its population of lepidoptera. I then travelled by the auto-route bypassing Cannes to Fréjus, completing the 80 miles to Bormes-les-Mimosas by dusk. This small town had been also Mr. Bretherton's headquarters. I put up at the very well appointed and comfortable Grand Hotel several hundred feet up, overlooking the town with a fine view of the Mediterranean. But on arrival I was soon able to appreciate the devastation wrought by the great forest fire which raged for several days in August 1965. Even my hotel was singed and only

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